



Opinion

The Enterprise

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As most of us have experienced the impacts of mental health and substance abuse, whether directly or indirectly, this film and discussion could benefit you and your loved ones. Having you there in person will help show your commitment to having compassion for those with mental health conditions, including drug/alcohol problems, and, importantly, to reducing stigma. It also shows a courageous willingness to simply try to understand. Join us on Oct. 6! Let's talk. Let's listen. Let's cultivate compassion.

Lucas O'Laughlin,
Behavioral Health Manager, One Community Health
Kirby Richards,
Director, Skamania County Community Health
Colleen Regalbuto,
Gorge Wellness Alliance

Facing the facts: plastic bag editorial was disappointing

By the time you read this, both Bingen and White Salmon will likely have made their decisions on the checkout bag ordinance. Whatever the outcome, I would like to address the recent Enterprise editorial on this subject. Our Community Upcycle team spent months working with Harvest Market, Washington Food Industries Association and Zero Waste WA crafting a proposal that would address their needs while aligning to avoid future changes should a statewide ban eventually pass.

Twenty-eight White Salmon businesses have signed an endorsement letter in favor. *The Enterprise's* focus on the opposition and political framing of the issue, rather than the overwhelming support of the business community was disappointing. To suggest that the White Salmon council would pass it because they are "liberal" and not that they would consider the city's important business base is unfair.

I was also disappointed that *The Enterprise* did not mention these additional facts, all of which were provided in an interview days before they went to print: 1. Statistics show that a city the size of White Salmon uses nearly one million single-use plastic bags per year. 2. These bags are no longer recyclable according to Republic Services and are detrimental to their processing. 3. Statistics show the

They have strung giant fences around the dump to catch the plastic bags. A falconer with a falcon has been hired to scare off the birds twice a week so the birds don't try to eat the bags!

I later walked along the Columbia River at Roosevelt and noticed much plastic caught along the edge of the river, on the way to the ocean. Yikes. Good reason to reduce the number of plastic bags.

Shelley Baxter
White Salmon

It's like herding feral cats to their annual bath

Columbia Gorge Audubon Society has asked U.S. Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, along with Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler, for a Congressional intervention and investigation of U.S. Forest Service neglect and mismanagement of the White Salmon and Klickitat National Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Weyerhaeuser is now selling its timberlands in the Mid-Columbia region through a Hood River real estate office, including 240 acres straddling the White Salmon National Scenic River and they want development prices for this timberland property. According to the real estate office, a residential developer has made an offer. Will this sensitively located property be brought into public ownership as it should be, or will it be used for residential development? Here are some predictions:

The real estate office and Weyerhaeuser want development value, but worry about bad PR that goes with marketing timberland conversion to residential development along a Wild and Scenic River. Not something a "Tree Growing Company" should be doing. They will claim the Forest Service doesn't want to buy, or will only pay fair market value, and hunker down and see if this blows over. Audubon's efforts moved the Forest Service to talk to

The determined Texans would continue to battle Santa Ana and his army for another year and a half before winning their independence and establishing the Republic of Texas. History.com

The Enterprise welcomes letters to the editor

the real estate office but this looks like a "cover your behind" gesture to us. The Portland-based environmental community keeps funding priorities in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area while the Wild and Scenic Rivers go a-begging. The Forest Service will be looking for excuses not to purchase this land. And they know them all, because they have been there, done that before.

We believe a developer will likely urge Klickitat County Commissioners to oppose bringing this land into public ownership so they can buy and develop it for housing. And, they probably want the taxpayers to finish improving Oak Ridge Road to raise lot value.

This Weyerhaeuser property is a fraction of their land sale but will have a huge impact on the White Salmon National Scenic River. The Forest Service and Weyerhaeuser need to take a breath and begin negotiating in good faith to bring this property into public ownership. Fear of public exposure is the only thing keeping this timberland conversion from happening. Trying to get these people to do the right thing is like herding feral cats to an annual bath. It would be hilarious if it wasn't so pathetic.

Dave Thies
White Salmon

Are supermarkets reducing plastic pollution?

(StatePoint) Plastic pollution is a crisis for communities, oceans and waterways, according to environmental experts, who point out that supermarkets has made a commitment to reduce its plastic footprint. However, even these top-ranked retailers have a long way